(b) if so, what steps, if any, are being taken to sanction and create new spindlage capacity in Madhya Pradesh;

(c) whether there are proposals to set up any new cotton spinning mills in the cooperative sector in Madhya Pradesh in the Seventh Five Year Plan; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI RAFIQUE ALAM): (a) and (b) The production of cotton is concentrated in some States only while its consumption is determined by the location of Spinning mills which are spread over various States. It is not necessary that cotton produced in a particular State should be consumed in the same State. Further, the licensing of new spinning mills is determined by various factors like industrial backwardness, etc. Availability of cotton is only one of the factors taken into consideration.

(c) The Madhya Pradesh Government has not so far during the Seventh Five Year Plan period recommended any proposal for the establishment of new cooperative spinning mills.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

Inter-State Councils

850. SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any steps to constitute Inter-State Councils;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) if not, what are the reasons for the delay in constituting such Councils?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) to (c) The under-mentioned three Inter-State Councils have been set up for specific purposes under the provision of article 263;

(i) Central Council of Health set up on 9th August, 1951.

(ii) Central Council of Local Self Government set up on 16th September, 1954.

(iii) Council on Sales Tax and State Excise Duty was set up on 1st February, 1968 for each of the four Zones.

In addition, five Zonal Councils for the Eastern, Western, Northern; Southern and Central Zones constituted under the States Reorganisation Act, 1956 are also functioning, besides the North Eastern Council for the States of the North-Eastern Region constituted under the North Eastern Council Act, 1971. These Councils are also providing forums for consultation among the States and between the Centre and the States.

Purification of water of Ganga River

851. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) how far the water of the river Ganga has been purified so far;

(b) whether it has become worth for drinking; and

(c) what amount has been spent so far by Government on the 'Ganga Action Plan'?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) Under the Ganga Action Plan, a total of 262 schemes have been sanctioned at a cost of Rs. 256.28 crores for the three States of U.P., Bihar and West Bengal. So far 45 schemes at a cost of about Rs. 13.00

crores have been completed. Most of the schemes for interception and diversion of waste water presently flowing into the river are expected to be completed by the end of the Seventh Five Year Plan. The qualitative improvement in the river can be asssessed only after the works are completed.

(b) The objective of the Ganga Action Plan is to improve the river water quality to make it fit for bathing.

(c) Till 31st October, 1988 an amount of Rs. 100.40 crores has been spent by the Government.

Fraud Detected in the General Insurance Corporation

852. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOUDHURY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item which appeared in the 'BLITZ' of the 29th October, 1988 to the effect that a massive fraud pertaining to the smooth syphoning off of crores of rupees from the four nationalised subsidiaries of the General Insurance Corporation, *viz.* United India, New India, National and Oriental, has been unearthed in Bombay by an ace insurance surveyor;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard and whether any arrests have been made in this connection; and

(c) whether any inquiry has since been conducted into the matter and if so, with what results?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO) (a) to (c) Government have seen a press news item which appears in the Blitz of 29th October, 1988, about alleged massive fraud resulting in the settlement of claims relating to stolen vehicles. Since the subject matter of the report refers to the role of the Regional Transport Authority, Bombay and the Bombay Municipal Corporation, General Insurance Corporation of India, which is the holding company of four subsidiary insurance companies, namely, National Insurance Co. Ltd., New India Assurance Co. Ltd., Oriental Insurance Co. Ltd. and United India Insurance Co. Ltd. have referred the matter to the State police for investigation. They have advised their companies to collect details of total loss claims paid on stolen vehicles in Bombay since 1984. They are also taking necessary steps to make possible recoveries, against claims settled on these stolen vehicles.

Impact of air Pollution on Forest trees

853. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOUDHURY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared in the Indian Express of the 28th October, 1988 to the effect that air pollution is contributing to the decline and ultimate destruction of forest trees;

(b) if so, what is the estimated loss of trees in the country during the last three years, year-wise as a result thereof; and

(c) what steps are being taken by Government to save the forests from air pollution?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No estimate of the loss of trees in the forests dur to air pollution is available.

(c) The steps taken by the Government to save the forests from air pollution include:

(i) Guidelines for siting of industries have been evolved.

(ii) Emission standards have been specified for major air polluting industries.

(iii) Consents are required to be taken under the Air (Prevention